

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 531  
Ways and Means

(Delegate Wu, *et al.*)

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**Public Schools STEM and Robotics Program Task Force - Establishment**

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This bill establishes the Public Schools Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and Robotics Program Task Force to (1) collect specified information regarding existing STEM and robotics programs in public schools in the State and other states; (2) study the feasibility of implementing competitive STEM and robotics programs in public schools throughout the State, including potential approaches and resources needed; and (3) make recommendations on establishing competitive robotics programs as varsity sports in every public high school in the State. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) must provide staff for the task force. A member of the task force may not receive compensation as a member of the task force but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses. The task force must by December 15, 2026, report its findings and recommendations to General Assembly and specified committees of the General Assembly, including specified standing committees. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026, and terminates June 30, 2027.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** MSDE can likely staff the task force with existing resources. Any expense reimbursements are assumed to be minimal and absorbable with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

**Local Effect:** Representatives from local school systems can participate in the task force with existing resources. Local revenues are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** Chapters 681 and 682 of 2016 established the Robotics Grant Program to increase the number of robotics programs in the State. As expanded under Chapter 428 of 2019, the program may provide grants to public schools and nonprofit organizations that (1) provide youth with an out-of-school-time experience that focuses on personal and workforce development and (2) serve public school students as a majority of its participating youth. Schools and nonprofit organizations proposing a new robotics club or with an existing robotics program or club are eligible for a grant. Nonprofit organizations must be associated with a public school to be eligible. The Governor must appropriate at least \$350,000 in the annual State budget for the program.

MSDE advises that the Robotics Grant Program supports 30 grantees across 11 local school systems and 4 non-profit organizations, which support robotics programs at over 30 high schools, 12 middle schools, and 45 elementary schools.

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### Additional Information

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Commerce; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Department of Labor; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 16, 2026  
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Analysis by: Michael E. Sousane

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510